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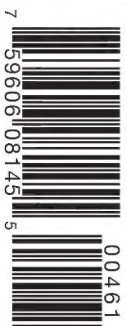
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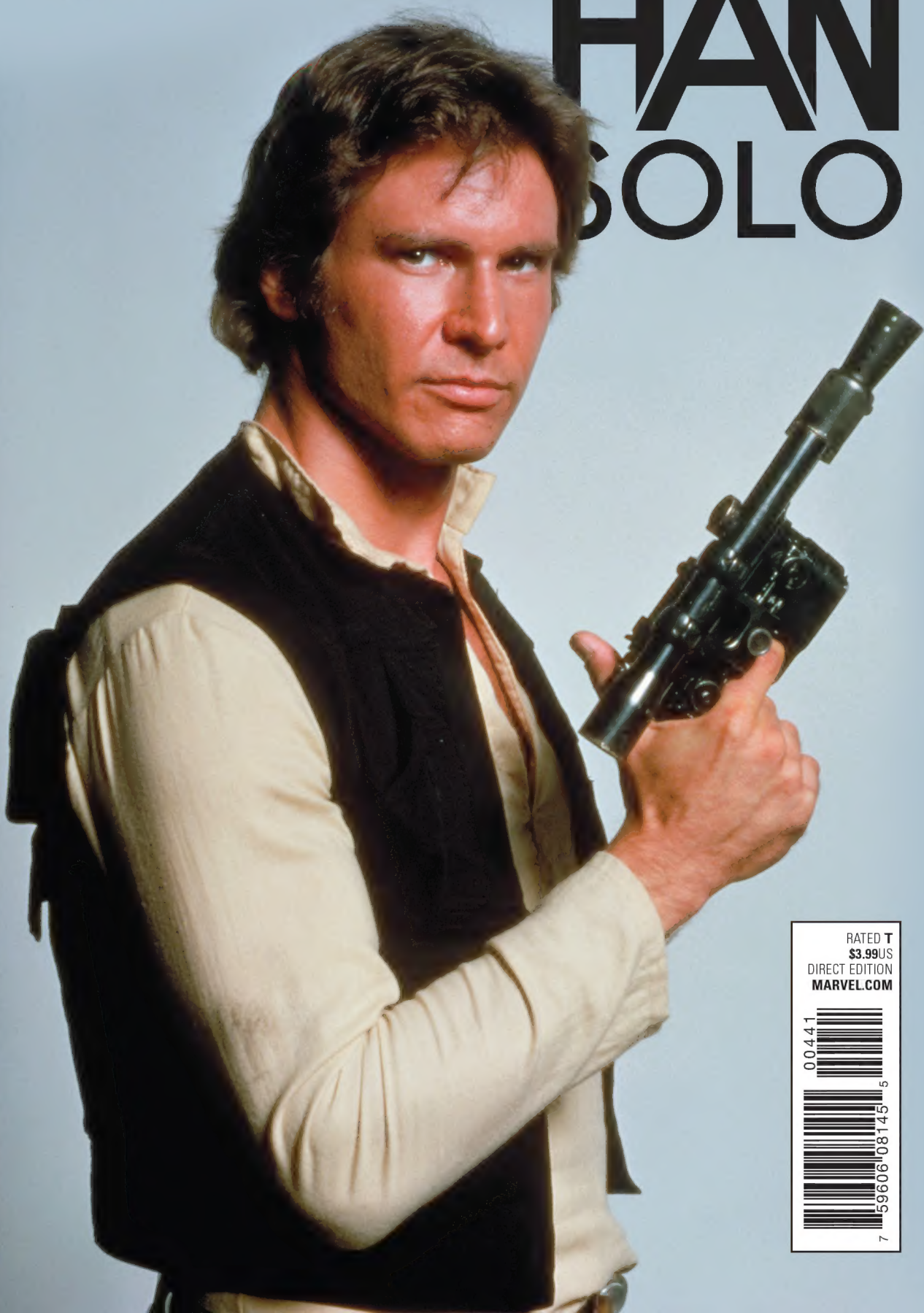
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HAN SOLO



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HAN SOLO

Part IV

It is a period of unrest. In a galaxy oppressed by the Empire's merciless cruelty, there is little hope for the future. Nonetheless, rebels have banded together to fight back against corruption.

*Untrusting by nature, Han Solo has returned his focus to smuggling. However, when Princess Leia approaches him with an offer too good to refuse, Han finds himself racing the *Millennium Falcon* in one of the most notorious races in the galaxy, the Dragon Void, as a cover to find a potentially traitorous rebel spy.*

After a deadly start to the race, Han finds the informant, a rebel spy named Bot, and brings him aboard the Falcon. But when Han finds the next target he quickly discovers that Chewbacca and the mysterious rebel spy have an old score to settle....

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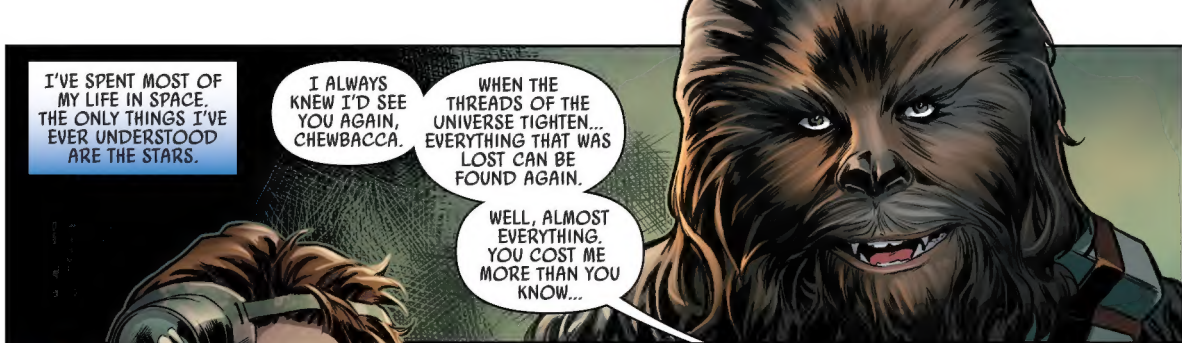
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I'VE SPENT MOST OF MY LIFE IN SPACE. THE ONLY THINGS I'VE EVER UNDERSTOOD ARE THE STARS.

I ALWAYS KNEW I'D SEE YOU AGAIN, CHEWBACCA.

WHEN THE THREADS OF THE UNIVERSE TIGHTEN... EVERYTHING THAT WAS LOST CAN BE FOUND AGAIN.

WELL, ALMOST EVERYTHING. YOU COST ME MORE THAN YOU KNOW...



ON A GOOD, FAST SHIP... ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE. ANY CHOICE, ANY OPPORTUNITY.

...WHEN YOU KILLED MY BABY.

FIRST OF ALL, DORAE... THAT WAS *NOT* YOUR BABY. IT WAS A NEWLY HATCHED RATHTAR.

AND IT WAS GOING TO EAT ME.



ALL I EVER WANTED WAS FREEDOM.

BECAUSE YOU WERE TRYING TO *STEAL* IT, SOLO. I NEEDED THAT RATHTAR TO PAY OFF SOME IMPORTANT PEOPLE.

AFTER CHEWBACCA KILLED IT, I COULDN'T AFFORD THE RIGHT BRIBES. BECAUSE I COULDN'T PAY THOSE BRIBES, I COULDN'T AFFORD THE RIGHT PROTECTION. AND LOSING THAT PROTECTION... LED TO SOME VERY BAD THINGS.



YEAH? BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO ALL OF US.

I AIN'T NOBLE. DEFINITELY NOT A HERO. I GOT ONE PRIORITY, AND *ONLY* ONE.

BUT IF SHOOTING SOMEONE WILL MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER... THEN I VOLUNTEER TO BE FIRST IN LINE.

ME.



I--I WON'T
LET YOU
K-KILL ME, YOU
T-TRAITOR!

WHAT?
WHO ARE
YOU?

DON'T PLAY
STUPID. THE ONLY
REASON YOU'RE
HERE--

I WASN'T
TALKING
TO YOU.

I WAS
TALKING TO
THEM.



PUT
DOWN THE
BLASTER.



AH, GOOD.
YOU ARE NOT
YET DEAD, PILOT
SOLO.

WE'RE ON A
TIGHT SCHEDULE,
MADAM LOO
RE ANNO.

IF YOU
DON'T MIND, WE'LL
JUST SHOOT THEM
ALL AND GO BACK
TO OUR SHIP.



HEY!
I HAD
THIS.

D-DON'T
KILL ME. I'M
DONE BEING
BRAVE.

REALLY,
PILOT SOLO...THERE
IS ENOUGH DRAMA
IN THIS RACE WITHOUT
YOU ADDING
TO IT.

YOUR
WITNESS WAS QUITE
WORRIED FOR YOU
AND THE WOOKIEE. IT
CAME TO FETCH ME WHEN
IT REALIZED YOUR
APPARENT PERIL.



MY...
WITNESS?



MY **DRAMA**
IS NONE OF YOUR
BUSINESS. TELL THAT...
THING...TO BACK
OFF.

YOU,
TOO.

I'VE NEVER
SEEN TWI'LEK
PILOTS. SHOULDN'T YOU
BE OFF SOMEWHERE,
DANCING FOR YOUR
MASTERS?

OH, I AM
DEFINITELY
KILLING YOU.



HEY, FUR
FACE.

DON'T
TALK TO
THEM LIKE
THAT.

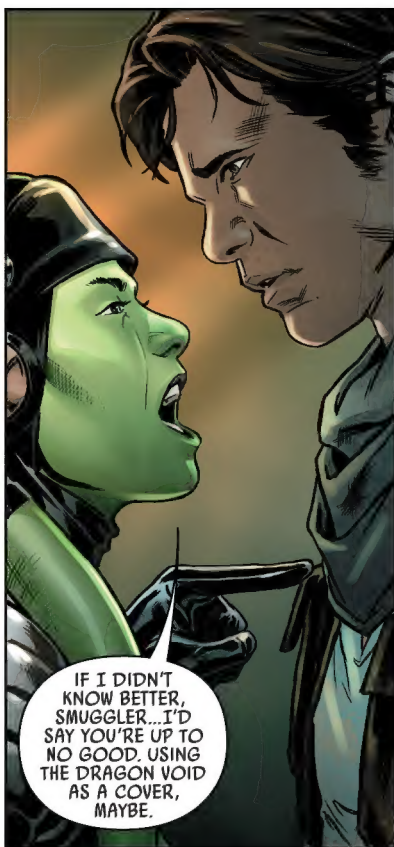


ALL OF YOU--OFF MY SHIP. RIGHT NOW.

FINE. WE SHOULD HAVE LET YOU DIE.

WE ONLY CAME OUT OF RESPECT FOR LOO RE ANNO.

THIS IS NOT HOW THE DRAGON VOID IS RUN, YOU KNOW. WE DON'T TAKE ON PASSENGERS. WE DON'T DO... BUSINESS.



IF I DIDN'T KNOW BETTER, SMUGGLER...I'D SAY YOU'RE UP TO NO GOOD. USING THE DRAGON VOID AS A COVER, MAYBE.



PILOT SOLO WOULD NOT BE SO FOOLISH, NOWK.



YEAH, I'M A LITTLE BUSY RIGHT NOW. THANKS FOR BUTTING IN BACK THERE, BUT--



WALK WITH ME.

SURE. JUST...FOR A MINUTE.

CHEWIE, YOU GOT THIS?

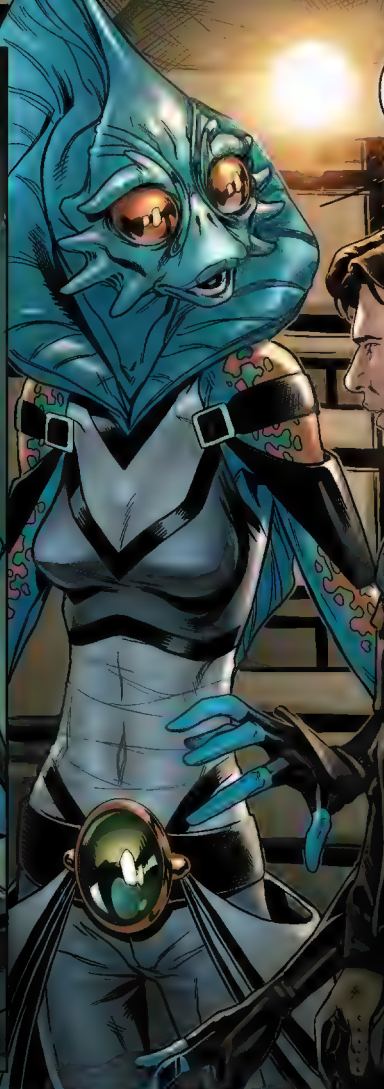
ARRRGH.





THE DRAGON VOID, AND ITS IDEALS, CHANGED THE CULTURE OF MY PEOPLE. WE BECAME UNIFIED IN WAYS WE HAD NOT THOUGHT POSSIBLE.

WE NO LONGER TOOK PLEASURE IN THE EMBRACE OF SOLITUDE, BUT INSTEAD CELEBRATED THE UNITY WE FOUND IN EACH OTHER.



FOR MY PEOPLE, THE DRAGON VOID IS A REMINDER OF THAT PROMISE. IT IS MORE THAN A RACE.

IT IS A SACRED RITE THAT DEMANDS WE EXPAND OUR DREAMS OF WHAT WE CAN BECOME.

WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME THIS?



THE STARS ARE IN YOUR BLOOD, PILOT SOLO.

ALL THAT YOU ARE, ALL THAT YOU HAVE BEEN, CAN BE DISTILLED INTO THAT ONE FACT. I SEE IT IN YOU.

AS DO THE WITNESSES.

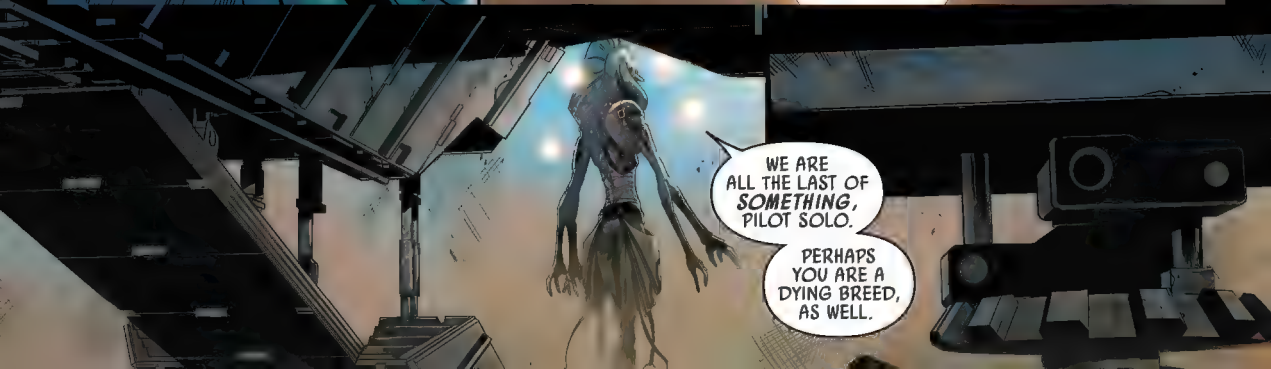
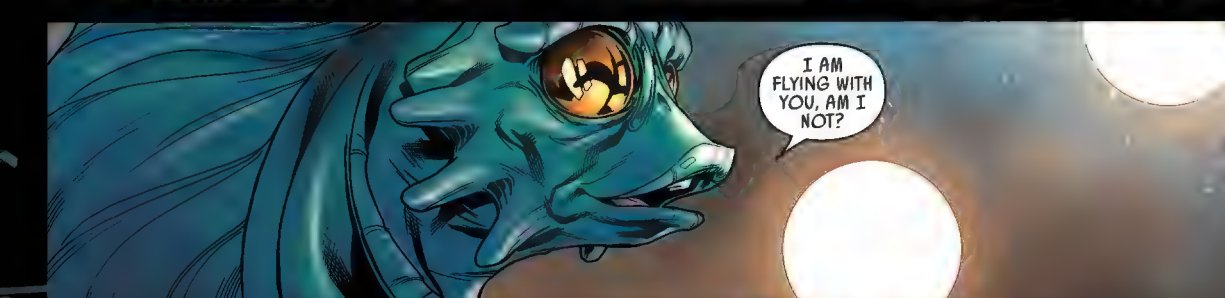


YOU'RE CRAZY.

I'M A NOBODY. JUST A PILOT.

A DARN GOOD PILOT, BUT NOTHING SPECIAL.

I LIKE IT THAT WAY. SPECIAL PEOPLE...THEY END UP STICKING THEIR NECKS OUT AND DOING THINGS THAT MAKE THEM DEAD.





OH,
GOOD.

I'M GLAD
WE NEEDED THE
THREAT OF DEATH
TO FIX ALL OUR
PROBLEMS.



NO ONE PULLS A
BLASTER ON ME, NOT
ON MY SHIP. YOU
GOT THAT?

HEY, BUDDY.
SHE WANTED
TO KILL YOU,
REMEMBER?

ARGGGHAAAAG.

WE'VE
RECONCILED.
FOR NOW.

THE PAST
CAN'T BE CHANGED
AND THERE ARE MORE
IMPORTANT THINGS
TO WORRY ABOUT.



SO, YOU'RE
THE OTHER
INFORMANT.

HAN...
DON'T TRUST
HER.

I IMAGINED
SOMEONE...
SHORTER.



WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING HERE,
DORAE?

DON'T
WORRY, I'M JUST
AS SURPRISED
TO SEE THE TWO
OF YOU.

HAN SOLO
AND CHEWBACCA...
ALLIANCE SPIES?
WHERE'S THE PROFIT
IN THAT?



CHEWBACCA
CAN BE A SOFTIE,
BUT YOU? IT SIMPLY
ISN'T POSSIBLE THAT YOU
FINALLY CARE ABOUT
SOMETHING MORE
THAN MONEY.

ALMOST
AS UNLIKELY AS
YOU BECOMING
AN ALTRUIST. OR
LEAVING THAT
TRAP OF A BAR
YOU OWN.



I DIDN'T
HAVE MUCH
CHOICE.

THAT
PROTECTION I
COULDN'T PAY FOR?
IT MEANT I LOST
EVERYTHING TO THE
EMPIRE. EVEN MY
FRIENDS WERE
TAKEN.

THE
EXPERIENCE
GAVE ME A NEW
PERSPECTIVE.



I'M...
SORRY TO
HEAR THAT.

WOOFEEEE

THAT'S THE RACE ALERT. WE'VE GOT LESS THAN A MINUTE BEFORE TAKEOFF.

WE'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE, SOLO.

WE'RE WAITING FOR SOMEONE. THE LAST OF US.

THAT CAN'T BE.

WE'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE ON THE SAME PLANET.

PLANS CHANGE. AFTER THAT SCARE WITH THE STORMTROOPERS, THE ALLIANCE TOOK A CALCULATED RISK AND ASKED THE THIRD MEMBER OF OUR GROUP TO MEET US HERE.

THE ATTACK ON YOU ALSO ALTERED THE TIMETABLE.

YOU'RE GOING TO WAIT HERE, PULL FROM THE RACE...

...AND DELIVER US BACK TO ALLIANCE TERRITORIES.

HOW COME LEIA DIDN'T CONTACT ME HERSELF WITH THIS INFORMATION? SHE GOT A MESSAGE THROUGH ONCE ALREADY.

SHE MUST HAVE BEEN DESPERATE. THAT WAS A FOOLISH MOVE.

HAVEN'T YOU BEEN LISTENING?

YOU CANNOT LEAVE THIS PLANET.

YOUR RACE IS OVER, SOLO.



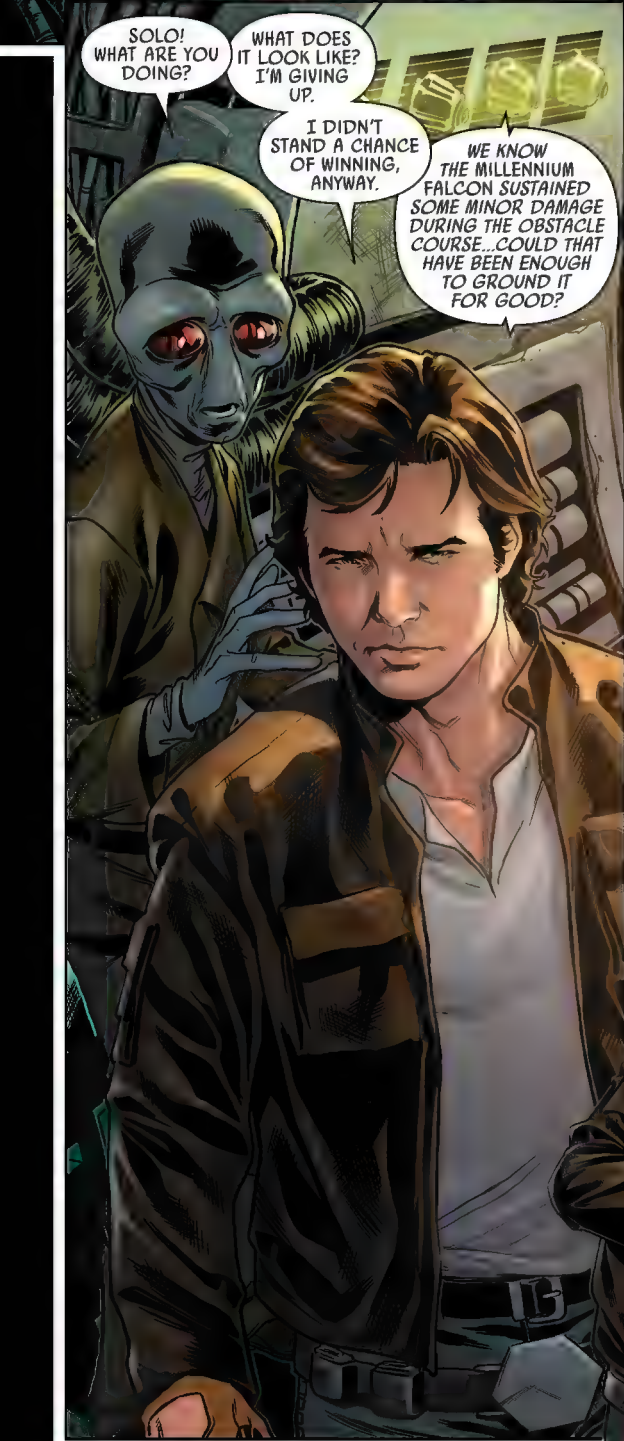
PILOT SOLO,
IF YOU DO NOT TAKE
OFF FROM THE PLANET'S
SURFACE IN THE NEXT
FIVE MINUTES, YOU WILL
BE DISQUALIFIED.



PILOT
SOLO? DO
YOU COPY?



IN A STRANGE TURN OF EVENTS, PILOT SOLO IS NOT TAKING OFF WITH THE OTHER RACERS.



SOLO! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE? I'M GIVING UP.

I DIDN'T STAND A CHANCE OF WINNING, ANYWAY.

WE KNOW THE MILLENNIUM FALCON SUSTAINED SOME MINOR DAMAGE DURING THE OBSTACLE COURSE... COULD THAT HAVE BEEN ENOUGH TO GROUND IT FOR GOOD?



I WASN'T TALKING ABOUT THE RACE, YOU IDIOT!

WE NEED TO LEAVE! NOW!

I DON'T TRUST A WORD THAT OTHER INFORMANT SAID. I THINK SHE'S HOLDING US HERE TO BE AMBUSHED.



WHY DON'T YOU JUST RELA--



BOOM! BOOM!

OH, COME ON.







THEY'RE NOT TRYING TO HIT US. WHY?

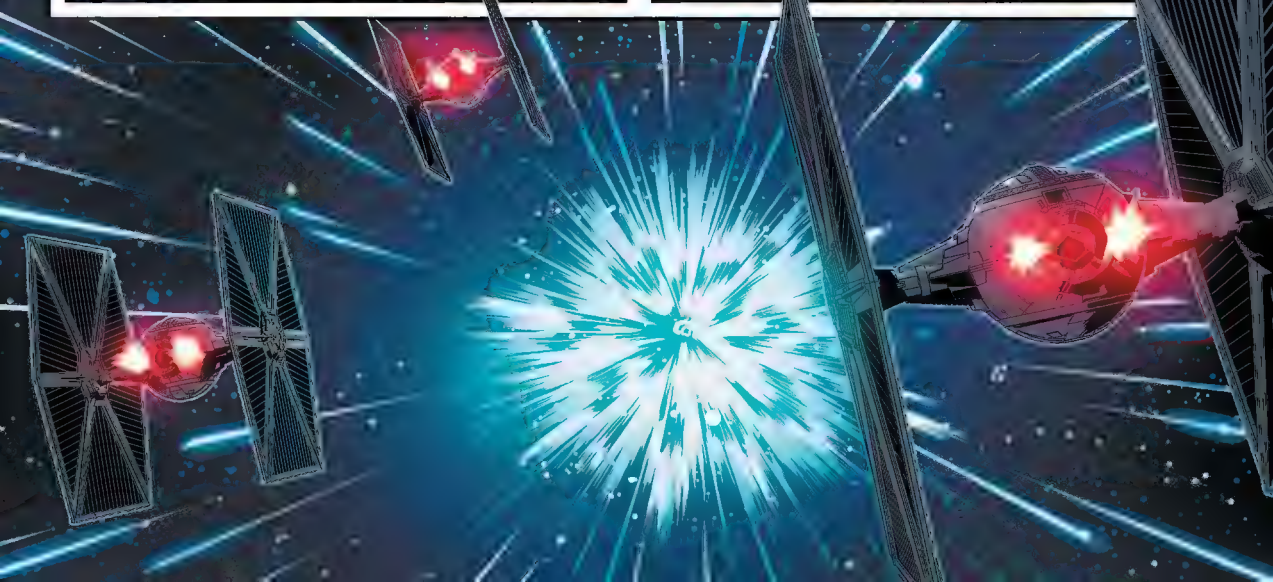
THEY DON'T WANT TO DESTROY WHAT'S ON BOARD.

DON'T WORRY, THOUGH. ONCE WE'RE CAPTURED, THEY'LL MAKE SURE TO FINISH THE JOB.



GREAT. JUST GREAT.

STRAP IN, EVERYONE. WE'RE JUMPING INTO HYPER-SPACE.





IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, WOOKIEE.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, U'IL? YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A BODYGUARD.



THAT'S CORRECT, BOT. I WAS SENT TO FETCH YOUNG ARAN RIGHT AFTER THAT DEBACLE ON YOUR PLANET.

STORMTROOPERS AMBUSHED US AS WE APPROACHED THE FALCON. AS IF THEY KNEW WE WERE COMING.



THE TRAITOR MUST HAVE FOUND A WAY TO ALERT THE EMPIRE THAT THE REBELLION'S INFORMANTS ARE FINALLY IN ONE PLACE.

ON THIS SHIP, YOU MEAN.

WHAT YOU'RE ALSO SAYING IS THAT ONE OF YOU IS A TRAITOR. THAT'S THE ONLY WAY STORMTROOPERS WOULD HAVE KNOWN TO TARGET YOU HERE-- RIGHT NOW.



IT'S HER.

OH, STOP.

JUST BECAUSE I POINTED A GUN AT CHEWBACCA DOESN'T MAKE ME A TRAITOR.

SPITEFUL, YES. THESE TWO HAVE THAT EFFECT ON PEOPLE.



IF I MIGHT INTERRUPT...WE ARE ALL HERE BECAUSE OUR LIVES ARE AT RISK FOR AIDING THE REBELLION.

I DON'T WANT TO DIE.



YOU'RE NOT GOING TO, KID. NOT ON MY WATCH.

CHEWIE...CHECK ALL OF THEM. IF THEY'VE GOT WEAPONS, TAKE THEM. I DON'T EVEN WANT THESE FOUR CARRYING TOOTH-PICKS.

I DON'T FEEL COMFORTABLE TURNING OVER MY BLADES. SURELY, FOR MY OWN PERSONAL PROTECTION--



AND LISTEN, IF CHEWIE DECIDES TO RIP OFF YOUR LIMBS, THAT'S JUST WHAT HAPPENS.

YOU'RE HORRIBLE, SOLO.

WELL, FOR ONCE, HE'S BEING HONEST.



DEATH BY WOOKIEE DISMEMBERMENT IS SOMETHING I WOULD LIKE TO SEE.

YEAH?

U'IL, IS IT? WHY DO I GET THE FEELING YOU'RE MORE THAN JUST A BODYGUARD?



OF COURSE I'M MORE THAN A SIMPLE BODYGUARD.

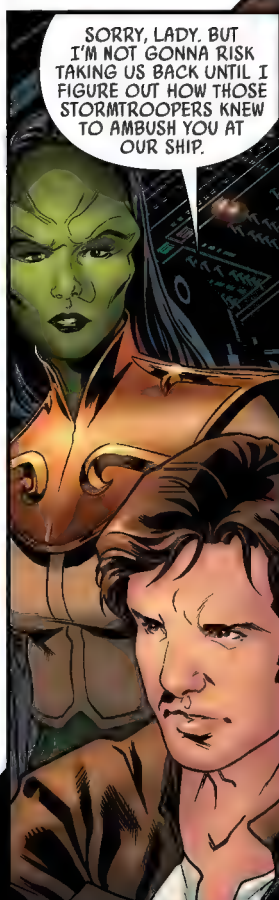
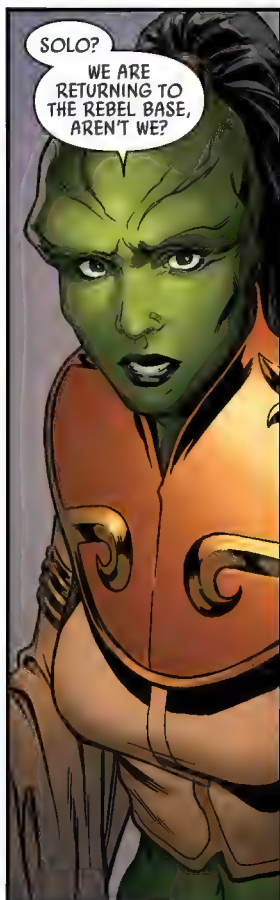
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT, AND YOU KNOW IT.

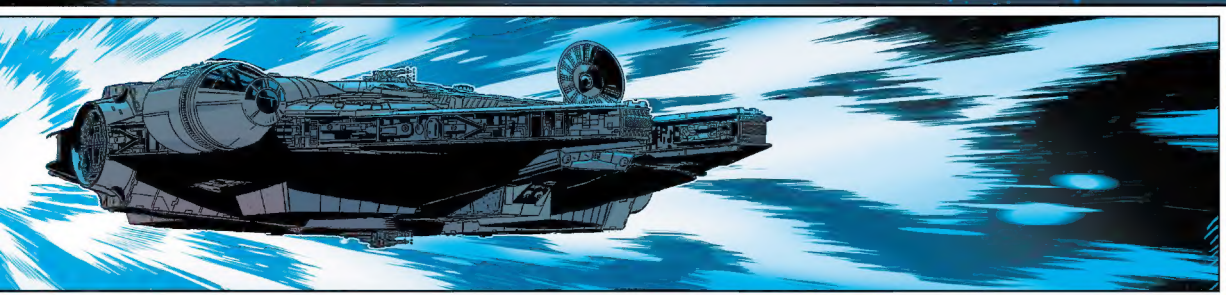


YOU SAID "HER WORSHIPFULNESS."

ONLY LEIA AND LUKE HAVE EVER HEARD ME SAY THAT.

WHICH MEANS YOU'VE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH HER.





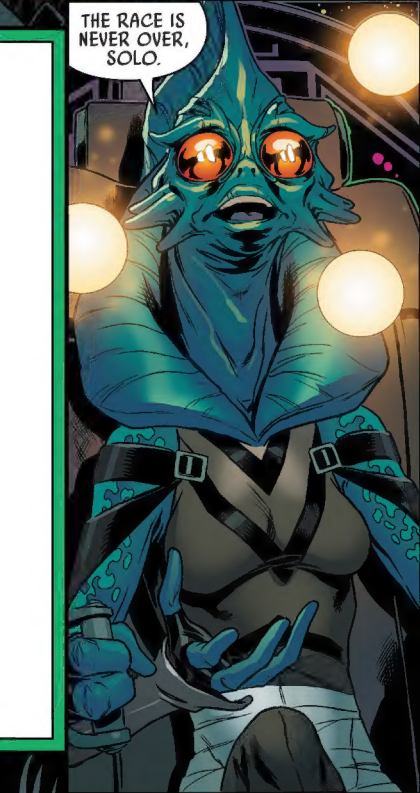


PILOT SOLO, DO YOU COPY?

I'M HERE.

I AM PLEASED YOU REJOINED US FOR THE LAST TEST OF THE DRAGON VOID.

I THINK THE RACE IS OVER, LOO RE ANNO.



THE RACE IS NEVER OVER, SOLO.



ISN'T THAT RIGHT, FELLOW PILOTS?



ARE WE NOT HERE TO FLY?



NNNARCH.

HAVE WE COME THIS FAR TO BE STOPPED NOW?



NO.



TO BE CONTINUED...

HAN SOLO

NEXT ISSUE:



A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away
is a lot easier to get to than you think –
and we want to hear from you!
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you want to make it onto a future letters
page. Don't forget to mark the letter
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